

# prophetstown

STATE PARK



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## THE PARK

Prophetstown State Park, on the northeast edge of the city along the south bank of the Rock River in Whiteside County, is a scenic and historic area offering a variety of recreational facilities. Once the site of an Indian village, the 53-acre park derives its name from the Indian prophet Wa-bo-kie-shiek.

Authorized by the Illinois General Assembly in 1947, the bill to make Prophetstown a state park was sponsored by State Representative George S. Brydia, who had served ten terms as mayor of Prophetstown. After preliminary park development was completed, the Prophetstown Park Boosters made elaborate plans for a day-long dedication celebration throughout the city.

Governor William G. Stratton dedicated the park in formal ceremonies there on September 18, 1953. Included in the activities were parades, boat races, fishing contests and an evening fireworks display.

## HISTORY

The Indian prophet Wa-bo-kie-shiek (White Cloud), who was of mixed Winnebago and Sauk descent, served as an advisor to the great Sauk war chief Black Hawk. In 1831, the advancement of white settlement forced Black Hawk and his followers from the Rock Island area into Iowa, with the promise that they would not return.

Under treaty, the land at Rock Island still belonged to the Indians until sold by the United States. The frontiersmen, however, were impatient and began to occupy the site of Black Hawk's village. In 1832, Black Hawk denounced the encroachment of the frontiersmen upon the lands of his people and set out from Iowa to retake the ceded land.

For a time in 1832, northwestern Illinois was the scene of many skirmishes between the Indians, the Illinois militia and the regular army. Prophetstown, the site of Wa-bo-kie-shiek's village, was destroyed on May 10, 1832, by troops of the state militia, commanded by Gen. Samuel Whiteside.

Black Hawk was finally chased into southern Wisconsin, culminating in a decisive defeat of the Indians a few miles south of Bad Axe on August 2, 1832. A few days later Black Hawk was captured and, after several months captivity during which time he was taken to Washington, D.C., he was permitted to return to his people in Iowa, where he died in 1838.





## NATURAL FEATURES

Prophetstown State Park is a scenic park bordering the Rock River just northeast from the sandbar near the mouth of Coon Creek. The park is in a well-wooded area and has a slightly rolling terrain. While hiking through the site, the visitor can see a variety of plants and animals, including ducks, squirrels, rabbits and muskrats and trees of walnut, oak, maple and locust.

## FACILITIES

**Picnicking:** Picnic tables and stoves are provided. No cooking may be done except on the camp or park stoves. There are 2 drinking fountains and pit toilets on the grounds.

**Fishing:** The fisherman will find the Rock River abundant with largemouth and smallmouth bass, bluegill, sunfish, crappie, channel catfish, bullhead, carp, pike, sauger, sucker and drum or, if he prefers, he can throw a line in Coon Creek. There are no boat docks but private boats can tie up near the shoreline.

**Camping:** An area for both tent and trailer camping is available. There are electrical outlets for trailers. Trailers may be serviced at the city disposal located near the park. All campers must obtain a permit from the park ranger. Group camping is available; groups of over 25 persons must have advance permission to enter the park.

**Horseshoe Court:** Visitors who enjoy competition in horseshoe pitching will enjoy this area.

**Swimming:** There is no swimming in the park, but about 4 blocks away many park visitors enjoy swimming in the Prophetstown Park District indoor-outdoor pool.

**Please:** This area is for all to enjoy so help keep it clean. Put all litter in the nearest available trash container.

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION . . .

Admittance will not be granted groups of 25 or more persons to any state park or conservation area unless permission from the park ranger has been secured to use the facilities. It is also required that groups of minors have adequate supervision and that at least one responsible adult accompany each group not exceeding 15 minors. All pets must be on a leash.

Numerous state parks and memorials are within easy access of every part of the state. Lodges, cabins and dining rooms are important features of Illinois Beach, Starved Rock, Pere Marquette, White Pines Forest and Giant City. Reservations for lodging should be made with lodge managers.

All state parks are open the year round. When weather conditions necessitate the closing of park roads during freezing and thawing periods, access to park facilities is by foot only.

For more details contact Park Ranger, Morrison-Rockwood State Park, Morrison 61270, phone 815/772-4708. For information on other Illinois sites, write the Department of Conservation, Information/Education Division, State Office Building, Springfield, 62706.





# Park Maps

